

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 L-02 IO-03 AID-10 DPW-01 RSR-01

EUR-10 (ADP) W

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R 271141Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5240

USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 13613

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MOPS, CA, HU, ID, PL, VS

SUBJECT: MR IV SITREP FOR JULY 27, 1973

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SAIGON INFO USDAO SAIGON USSAG NKP
JULY 27 REPEATED TO YOU

QUOTE CAN THO 0610

SUMMARY: MR IV REPORTED JULY 26 THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF INCIDENTS SINCE CEASEFIRE II, LARGELY BECAUSE OF INCREASED VC/NVA SHELLING IN CHAU DOC. FIGHTING HAS ALSO INCREASED IN BA XUYEN AND CAI LAY DISTRICT, DINH TUONG. THE VC CONTINUE DESTRUCTIVE SHELLING IN CHUONG THIEN. VC ASSASSINS MURDERED TWO YOUTHS IN CA MAU. INFILTRATION AND TRADING WITH THE VC CONTINUES IN KIEN TUONG. THE CANADIANS DEPARTED REGION VII JULY 26. A SCHEDULED PICK-UP OF PRG CIVIL DETAINEES WAS CANCELLED IN KIEN GIANG. END SUMMARY.

1. SECURITY SITUATION:

(A) MR IV REPORTED 25 VC-INITATED INCIDENTS JULY 25
AND 54 THE FOLLOWING DAY. THE 54 INCIDENTS OF JULY 26
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IS THE HIGHEST REPORTED IN THE DELTA SINCE THE COMMENCEMENT OF

CEASEFIRE II. INCREASED FIGHTING IN THE SEVEN MOUNTAINS AREA OF CHAU DOC ACCOUNTED FOR THE RISE IN VC-INITIATED INCIDENTS. MOST OF THIS NEW ACTIVITY TOOK THE FORM OF ATTACKS BY FIRE, WHICH INCREASED FROM 16 ON JULY 25 TO 40 THE FOLLOWING DAY. THE GVN REPORTEDLY LOST OVER THE TWO DAY PERIOD 37 KILLED, 172 WOUNDED, AND FOUR MISSING. THE GVN CLAIMED 71 VC/NVA DEAD AND FIVE CAPTURED.

(B) THROUGHOUT THE DAY JULY 26 AND INTO THE EARLY MORNING OF JULY 27 THE VC/NVA HEAVILY SHELLED GVN POSITIONS IN TINH BIEN AND TRI TON DISTRICTS, CHAU DOC PROVINCE. TWO GROUND ATTACKS ACCOMPANIED THE SHELLING. THE VC/NVA OVERRAN ONE RF OUTPOST IN TINH BIEN BUT WERE BEATEN OFF IN ANOTHER ASSAULT. THE CHAU DOC INTERPROVINCE REPRESENTATIVE BELIEVES THAT THIS INCREASED SHELLING DOES NOT SIGNAL THE BEGINNING OF VC/NVA OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS IN THIS BORDER AREA. RATHER, HE SURMISES THAT THE VC/NVA ARE TRYING TO DISRUPT THE RF AND RANGER OPERATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN CHIPPING AWAY AT THEIR POSITIONS ON CO-TO AND DAI MOUNTAINS.

(C) THE VC APPEAR TO BE STEPPING UP COMBAT AND TERRORISM IN BA XUYEN. AN RF GROUP SUFFERED HEAVY CASUALTIES JULY 23 IN A FIGHT IN GIA HOA VILLAGE, THANH TRI DISTRICT. THE VC, PROBABLY UNITS OF THE PHU LOI I BATTALION, ATTACKED TWO COMPANIES OF THE 535TH RF BATTALION ABOUT 1700 HOURS. 33 RF WERE KILLED, FOUR WOUNDED, AND A LARGE NUMBER OF WEAPONS, INCLUDING 75 M-16S AND SEVEN M-79S WERE LOST. 57 RF ARE MISSING, SUGGESTING THAT THE GVN FORCE WAS SURPRISED BY THE VC AND RAN AWAY. TWO RECENT KIDNAPPING INCIDENTS ILLUSTRATE ANOTHER VC PERSUASION TACTIC. ON JULY 18 A GROUP OF 42 WORKERS, ON THE WAY HOME FROM WORK AT THE RACH GOI DAM SITE, TRUNG BINH VILLAGE, LICH HOI THUONG DISTRICT, WERE STOPPED BY FIVE ARMED VC. THE VC MADE THE WORKERS DESTROY THEIR BOATS, WHICH BELONGED TO THE GVN CONTRACTOR BUILDING THE DAM, THEN TOOK THEM BLINDFOLDED TO A CAMP ABOUT ONE KILOMETER FROM THE WORK SITE. TWO OF THE WORKERS MANAGED TO ESCAPE. THE REST WERE HELD OVERNIGHT, HARANGUED, AND ALL BUT TWO WERE RELEASED THE NEXT DAY WITH A WARNING NOT TO GO BACK TO

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WORK. ALL OF THE RELEASED WORKERS SUBSEQUENTLY QUIT THE DAM PROJECT. ON JULY 24 A VC COMPANY INFILTRATED TRINH TANH HAMLET, BA TRINH VILLAGE, KE SACH DISTRICT, AND CARRIED OFF 40 CIVILIANS, 31 OF WHOM THEY RELEASED THE NEXT DAY. THE FATE OF THOSE NOT RELEASED IN THE TWO INCIDENTS IS NOT KNOWN.

(D) CHUONG THIEN HAS QUIETED SOMEWHAT DURING CEASEFIRE

II BUT THE KILLING CONTINUES AS THE VC CONTINUES INDISCRIMINATE SHELLING OF OUTPOSTS AND POPULATION CENTERS. LONG MY DISTRICT TOWN ABOUT NOON JULY 25 RECEIVED THREE ROUNDS OF WHAT WAS PROBABLY 82MM MORTAR FIRE. TWELVE PEOPLE WERE WOUNDED, THREE OF THEM SERIOUSLY, IN THE TOWN BUS STATION. TWO MORE ROUNDS FELL THE NEXT DAY IN THE SAME SITE, WOUNDING FOUR. AT 0120 JULY 26 ELEVEN MORTAR ROUNDS FELL UPON THE SLEEPING POPULATION OF KIEN THIEN DISTRICT TOWN, WOUNDING TEN, INCLUDING TWO DEPUTY HAMLET CHIEFS AND TWO CHILDREN.

(E) CAI LAY DISTRICT, DINH TUONG, REPORTED NINE INCIDENTS PER DAY THE PAST TWO DAYS, A SLIGHT INCREASE IN ACTIVITY. FOR THE MOST PART THE VC ARE SHELLING REMOTE OUTPOSTS, CAUSING FEW CASUALTIES. BUT DURING THE NIGHT OF JULY 26, COMMUNICATION WAS LOST WITH HOA THANH OUTPOST, TAN PHU VILLAGE, WHICH HAD COME UNDER HEAVY VC ATTACK THE DAY BEFORE. AT 0400 JULY 27, 19 OF THE 35 HOA THANH DEFENDERS TURNED UP AT A NEARBY OUTPOST WITH THEIR WEAPONS. THE FATE OF THEIR COMRADES IS UNKNOWN.

(F) THE CONTINUING INSECURITY IN CA MAU CITY, AN XUYEN, WAS ILLUSTRATED BY TWO BRUTAL MURDERS IN THE EARLY MORNING OF JULY 26. A VC SQUAD ENTERED THE CITY AFTER CURFEW IN SEARCH OF THE CHIEF OF HAMLET NUMBER EIGHT, WHO LIVED NEAR THE CHIEU HOI CENTER. FINDING THE CHIEF NOT AT HOME, THE VC DRAGGED AWAY TWO YOUNG MEN, 15-AND 17-YEAR-OLD RELATIVES OF THE CHIEF WHO WERE SLEEPING IN THE HOUSE, AND KILLED THEM.

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5243

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAIGON 13613

LIMDIS

(G) MILITARY ACTIVITY CONTINUES IN KIEN TUONG PROVINCE, ALTHOUGH AT A RATE MUCH REDUCED SINCE CEASEFIRE II. 7TH ARVN DIVISION FORCES HAVE MADE ONLY OCCASIONAL CONTACTS IN THEIR EFFORT TO STOP THE ACTIVE INFILTRATION OF MEN AND GOODS FROM CAMBODIA INTO THE PROVINCE. IN AN OPEN-AIR MARKET IN BIEN HIEP VILLAGE, CHAU THANH DISTRICT, THE VC REGULARLY OBTAIN SALT, RICE, NUOC MAN, FOOTWEAR, AND OTHER SUPPLIES. THE PROVINCE CHIEF HAS EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN OVER CROSS-BORDER TRAFFIC IN RICE AND HAS ADMONISHED HIS POLICE AND DISTRICT CHIEFS FOR NOT DOING ENOUGH TO STOP THE PRACTICE.

2. ICCS/JMC: (A) THE REGION VII CANADIANS STRUCK THEIR FLAG AT THE ICCS COMPOUND IN CAN THO AT 0910 HOURS JULY 26. TWENTY MINUTES LATER, TO MUCH CLICKING OF CAMERA SHUTTERS AND TO THE SOFT WEEPING OF THE AO DAI-CLAD ICCS GIRLS, THE CANADIANS BOARDED THEIR C-46 FOR SAIGON AND HOME. THE VIETNAMESE BID THEM FAREWELL WITH CONCERN, THE INDONESIANS WITH TREPIDATION, AND THE POLES AND HUNGARIANS-- IT APPEARED TO THE AMERICAN VICE CONSUL--WITH NO LITTLE SATISFACTION. THUS, CANADIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE ICCS CAME TO AN END IN THIS REGION. CANADIAN DELEGATION CHIEF MANFRED VON NOSTITZ WROTE ITS EPITAPH AT A DINNER GIVEN BY MR IV COMMANDER MGEN NGUYEN VINH NGHI FOR THE DEPARTING CANADIANS JULY 23. AFTER REVIEWING AND DE-CONFIDENTIAL

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FENDING CANADA'S WORK ON THE ICCS AND LAYING THE BLAME FOR CONTINUING FIGHTING PRIMARILY AT THE DOOR OF THE VC/NVA, VON NOSTITZ OBSERVED THAT, IN THE ABSENCE OF REAL POLITICAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO VIETNAMESE PARITIES, THE ICCS WAS GOING THE WAY OF THE OLD ICC, "A BODY CHARGED WITH SUPERVISING A PEACE THAT NO LONGER EXISTED." DETERMINED TO AVOID A REPETITION OF ITS FRUSTRATING ICC EXPERIENCE, CANADA RELUCTANTLY CONCLUDED IT COULD NOT, UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, CONTRIBUTE TO THE RESTORATION OF PEACE IN VIET NAM. AFTER 19 YEARS OF CANADIAN PRESENCE IN VIET NAM, VON NOSTITZ CONCLUDED, THEY COULD LEAVE ONLY IN SADNESS TEMPERED BY HOPE.

(B) THE SCHEDULED RELEASE BY THE PRG OF 52 CIVIL DETAINEES IN KIEN GIAN WAS ABRUPTLY AND INEXPLICABLY CANCELLED DURING THE AFTERNOON OF JULY 25. THE PRISONERS WERE TO BE RELEASED IN ACCORDANCE WITH A TPJMC AGREEMENT OF JULY 20. NINE MORE CIVILIAN DETAINEES ARE SCHEDULED FOR RELEASE BY THE PRG IN AN XUYEN JULY 28, BUT THE

AMERICAN PROVINCE REPRESENTATIVE IN CA MAU REPORTS THAT
THE USUAL IMPASSE OVER PICK-UP SITES WILL PROBABLY
POSTPONE THE RELEASE. SIGNED LEHMANN UNQUOTE
MARTIN

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